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26 July 1956



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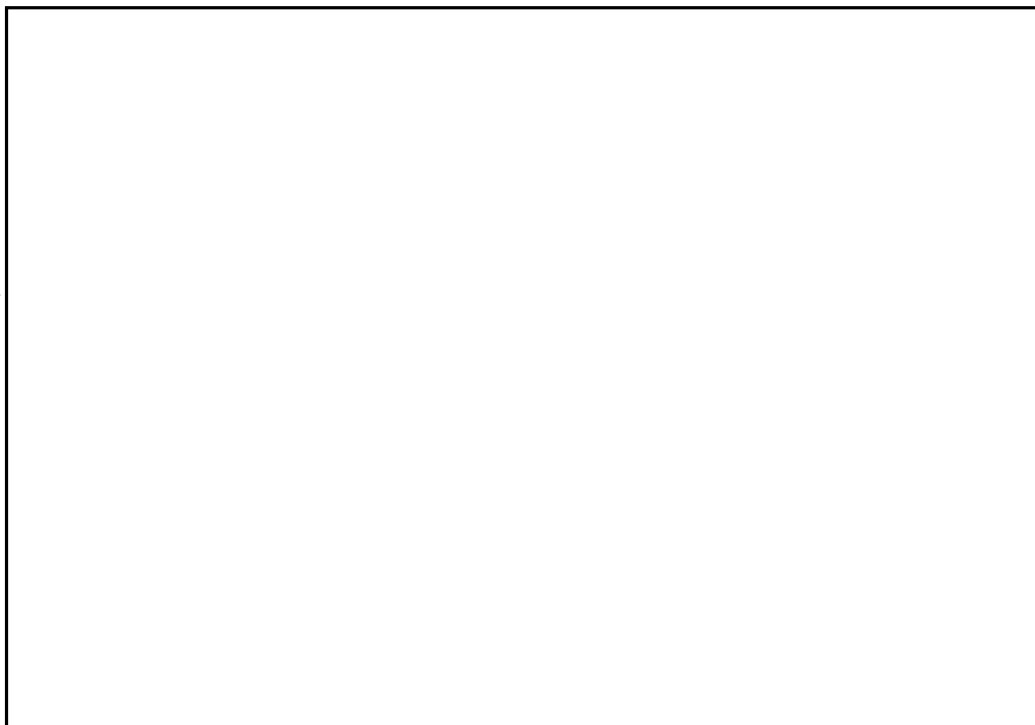
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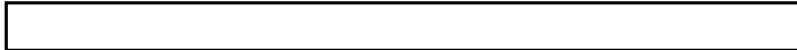
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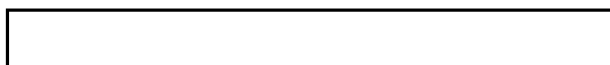


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1. BONN DEFENSE CHIEFS DISTRESSED OVER ALLIED TROOP REDUCTION PLANS

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[REDACTED] The distress exhibited by West Germany's Defense Minister Blank and General Speidel, chief of the armed forces, over US and British

[REDACTED] plans to reduce troop strength in Europe would "be hard to exaggerate," according to Ambassador Conant in Bonn. On 23 July they emphasized to Secretary of the Army Brucker the impossibility of passing the supplementary conscription law specifying the length of service unless the NATO meeting in September clarifies Anglo-American intentions. They also declared that failure to resolve the conscription issue would prevent the return of the present coalition government in the 1957 elections.

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Foreign Ministry officials believe that Chancellor Adenauer has been put in an embarrassing position since he recently denied any knowledge that the United States was placing primary emphasis on nuclear weapons. The Bonn government does not consider that the weapons question is one for the military only, since in Europe it is fraught with political implications, especially for German unification.

Comment

The West German press has said that an Anglo-American reduction does not necessarily imply smaller German forces than are now planned, but asserts at the same time that Bonn's military policies should be adjusted to new world conditions. The developing impression that ground forces in Europe are no longer as important as formerly will make it difficult for the government to have an 18-month conscription term approved in the fall.

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2. FRENCH AMBASSADOR TO MOSCOW SEEN DISILLUSIONED OVER SOVIET AIMS

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Ambassador Bohlen in Moscow believes that his French colleague, Maurice Dejean, has been "successfully disabused" of any illusions he

might have held as to the "possibility of normal diplomatic understandings" with the Soviet government. The Soviet vote in the UN Security Council to inscribe the Algerian issue, Pravda editorials urging Algerian independence, and the French Communist Party's open hostility toward the cabinet's Algerian policy have convinced Dejean that Moscow is actively working to undermine the French position in North Africa. Earlier this year Dejean, apparently reflecting Foreign Minister Pineau's policies, had made quite an effort to establish some form of personal relationship with Soviet officials.

Comment

The ambassador's reported new attitude will probably force the foreign minister to be less optimistic over the results which can be obtained through closer personal relationships with the Soviet leaders. Nevertheless, Pineau is unlikely to be deterred from his basic policy of pressing for closer contact with the bloc, particularly with the European Satellites.

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4. VIET MINH OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER COMMENTS ON MORALE

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An editorial in the official Viet Minh Nhan Dan of 22 July suggests a decline in Viet Minh morale resulting from the failure to obtain unification elections

this July, as originally scheduled by the 1954 Geneva conference. Some people, the editorial states, "have become pessimistic and disappointed" and there are a "number of compatriots who lack confidence in the future struggle for national unification." These "compatriots" are accused of overestimating the strength of the "American-Diem gang" and of not understanding that "our. . . cause will certainly triumph."

Mildly censorious, the editorial confirms the existence of sentiment in Hanoi favoring unification by recourse to its overwhelming military superiority over South Vietnam. Reference to such militant sentiment has not been noted since the central committee conference in April. On both occasions, the mildness of the reproof suggests that militancy is not in serious disfavor and lends greater weight to the suspicion that Hanoi's emphasis on a peaceful settlement with South Vietnam has been largely dictated by Moscow and Peiping.

Nhan Dan, pointing out that the struggle in Vietnam is political in nature, warns its readers to "intensify our tasks of propaganda and education among the people."

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